BEFORE THE MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation)	
Against:)	
)	
)	
Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D.)	Case No. 03-2009-204004
)	
Physician's and Surgeon's)	
Certificate No. A80123)	
	j j	
Respondent)	
•)	

DECISION

The attached Stipulation is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on April 5, 2013.

IT IS SO ORDERED: March 8, 2013.

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

Barbara Yaroslavsky, Chair

Panel A

1	KAMALA D. HARRIS		
2	Attorney General of California JOSE R. GUERRERO		
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General DAVID CARR		
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 131672		
5	455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 11000 San Francisco, CA 94102-7004		
6	Telephone: (415) 703-5538 Facsimile: (415) 703-5480		
7	Attorneys for Complainant		
8	BEFORE THE MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS		
9			
10	STATE OF C	CALIFORNIA	
11	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Medical Board Case No. 03-2009-204004	
12	CATHERINE BERGER-DUJMOVIC, M.D.	OAH No. 2012090870	
13	710 Lawrence Expressway, Suite 386		
14	Santa Clara, CA 95051	STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER	
15	Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate No. A 80123		
16	Respondent.		
17	Respondent.		
18			
19	In the interest of a prompt and speedy settlement of this matter, consistent with the public		
20	interest and the responsibility of the Medical Board of California of the Department of Consumer		
21	Affairs, the parties hereby agree to the following Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order		
22	which will be submitted to the Board for approva	al and adoption as the final disposition of the	
23	Accusation.		
24	<u>PARTIES</u>		
25	1. Linda K. Whitney ("Complainant")	s the Executive Director of the Medical Board of	
26	California. She brought this action solely in her official capacity and is represented in this matter		
27	by Kamala D. Harris, Attorney General of the State of California, by David Carr, Deputy		
28	Attorney General.		
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- 2. Respondent Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D. is represented in this proceeding by attorney Richard J. Conti, of Craddick, Candland & Conti, 2420 Camino Ramon, Suite 202, San Ramon, CA 94583-4202.
- 3. On or about August 9, 2002, the Medical Board of California issued Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate No. A 80123 to Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D. ("Respondent"). Unless renewed, the Certificate will expire June 30, 2014.

JURISDICTION

- 4. Accusation No. 03-2009-204004 was filed before the Medical Board of California (Board), Department of Consumer Affairs, and is currently pending against Respondent. The Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent on December 11, 2011. Respondent timely filed her Notice of Defense contesting the Accusation.
- 5. A copy of Accusation No. 03-2009-204004 is attached as exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

- 6. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 03-2009-204004. Respondent has also carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order.
- 7. Respondent is fully aware of her legal rights in this matter, including the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in the Accusation; the right to be represented by counsel at her own expense; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against her; the right to present evidence and to testify on her own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.
- 8. Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and every right set forth above.

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CULPABILITY

- 9. Respondent understands and agrees that the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 03-2009-204004, if proven at a hearing, constitute cause for imposing discipline upon her Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate.
- 10. For the purpose of resolving the Accusation without the expense and uncertainty of further proceedings, Respondent does not contest that, at an administrative hearing, Complainant could establish a *prima facie* case with respect to the charges and allegations in Accusation 03-2009-204004, and that her license is therefore subject to disciplinary action.
- 11. Respondent agrees to be bound by the Board's probationary terms as set forth in the Disciplinary Order below.

RESERVATION

12. The admissions made by Respondent herein are only for the purposes of this proceeding, or any other proceedings in which the Medical Board of California or other professional licensing agency is involved, and shall not be admissible in any other criminal or civil proceeding.

CONTINGENCY

13. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Medical Board of California. Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Medical Board of California may communicate directly with the Board regarding this stipulation and settlement, without notice to or participation by Respondent or her counsel. By signing the stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that she may not withdraw her agreement or seek to rescind the stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails to adopt this stipulation as its Decision and Order, the Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having considered this matter.

- 14. The parties understand and agree that facsimile copies of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, including facsimile signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.
- 15. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following Disciplinary Order:

DISCIPLINARY ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate No. A 80123, issued to Respondent Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D., is revoked. However, the revocation is stayed and Respondent is placed on probation for five (5) years on the following terms and conditions.

1. <u>CLINICAL TRAINING PROGRAM</u>. Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a clinical training or educational program equivalent to the Physician Assessment and Clinical Education Program (PACE) offered at the University of California - San Diego School of Medicine ("Program"). Respondent shall successfully complete the Program not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial enrollment unless the Board or its designee agrees in writing to an extension of that time.

The Program shall consist of a Comprehensive Assessment program comprised of a two-day assessment of Respondent's physical and mental health; basic clinical and communication skills common to all clinicians; and medical knowledge, skill and judgment pertaining to Respondent's area of practice in which Respondent was alleged to be deficient, and at minimum, a 40 hour program of clinical education in the area of practice in which Respondent was alleged to be deficient and which takes into account data obtained from the assessment, Decision(s), Accusation(s), and any other information that the Board or its designee deems relevant. Respondent shall pay all expenses associated with the clinical training program.

Based on Respondent's performance and test results in the assessment and clinical education, the Program will advise the Board or its designee of its recommendation(s) for the scope and length of any additional educational or clinical training, treatment for any medical condition, treatment for any psychological condition, or anything else affecting Respondent's

practice of medicine. Respondent shall comply with Program recommendations.

At the completion of any additional educational or clinical training, Respondent shall submit to and pass an examination. Determination as to whether Respondent successfully completed the examination or successfully completed the program is solely within the program's jurisdiction.

If Respondent fails to enroll in and successfully complete the clinical training program within the designated time periods, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. The Respondent shall not resume the practice of medicine until enrollment or participation in the outstanding portions of the clinical training program have been completed. If the Respondent did not successfully complete the clinical training program, the Respondent shall not resume the practice of medicine until a final decision has been rendered on the accusation and/or a petition to revoke probation. The cessation of practice shall not apply to the reduction of the probationary time period.

2. <u>SOLO PRACTICE PROHIBITION</u>. Respondent is prohibited from engaging in the solo practice of medicine. Prohibited solo practice includes, but is not limited to, a practice where: 1) Respondent merely shares office space with another physician but is not affiliated for purposes of providing patient care, or 2) Respondent is the sole physician practitioner at that location.

If Respondent fails to establish a practice with another physician or secure employment in an appropriate practice setting within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. The Respondent shall not resume practice until an appropriate practice setting is established.

If, during the course of the probation, the Respondent's practice setting changes and the Respondent is no longer practicing in a setting in compliance with this Decision, the Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee within 5 calendar days of the practice setting change. If Respondent fails to establish a practice with another physician or secure employment in an

appropriate practice setting within 60 calendar days of the practice setting change, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. The Respondent shall not resume practice until an appropriate practice setting is established.

3. NOTIFICATION. Within seven (7) days of the effective date of this Decision, the Respondent shall provide a true copy of this Decision and Accusation to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges or membership are extended to Respondent, at any other facility where Respondent engages in the practice of medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies, and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance coverage to Respondent. Respondent shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its designee within 15 calendar days.

This condition shall apply to any change(s) in hospitals, other facilities or insurance carrier.

- 4. <u>SUPERVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS</u>. During probation, Respondent is prohibited from supervising physician assistants.
- 5. <u>OBEY ALL LAWS</u>. Respondent shall obey all federal, state and local laws, all rules governing the practice of medicine in California and remain in full compliance with any court ordered criminal probation, payments, and other orders.
- 6. QUARTERLY DECLARATIONS. Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all the conditions of probation.

Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations not later than 10 calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

7. GENERAL PROBATION REQUIREMENTS.

Compliance with Probation Unit

Respondent shall comply with the Board's probation unit and all terms and conditions of this Decision.

Address Changes

Respondent shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of Respondent's business and residence addresses, email address (if available), and telephone number. Changes of such addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business and Professions Code section 2021(b).

Place of Practice

Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine in Respondent's or patient's place of residence, unless the patient resides in a skilled nursing facility or other similar licensed facility.

License Renewal

Respondent shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's license.

Travel or Residence Outside California

Respondent shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty (30) calendar days.

In the event Respondent should leave the State of California to reside or to practice Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing 30 calendar days prior to the dates of departure and return.

- 8. <u>INTERVIEW WITH THE BOARD OR ITS DESIGNEE</u>. Respondent shall be available in person upon request for interviews either at Respondent's place of business or at the probation unit office, with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.
- 9. NON-PRACTICE WHILE ON PROBATION. Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing within 15 calendar days of any periods of non-practice lasting more than 30 calendar days and within 15 calendar days of Respondent's return to practice. Non-practice is defined as any period of time Respondent is not practicing medicine in California as defined in Business and Professions Code sections 2051 and 2052 for at least 40 hours in a calendar month in direct patient care, clinical activity or teaching, or other activity as approved by the Board. All

time spent in an intensive training program which has been approved by the Board or its designee shall not be considered non-practice. Practicing medicine in another state of the United States or Federal jurisdiction while on probation with the medical licensing authority of that state or jurisdiction shall not be considered non-practice. A Board-ordered suspension of practice shall not be considered as a period of non-practice.

In the event Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation exceeds 18 calendar months, Respondent shall successfully complete a clinical training program that meets the criteria of Condition 18 of the current version of the Board's "Manual of Model Disciplinary Orders and Disciplinary Guidelines" prior to resuming the practice of medicine.

Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation shall not exceed two (2) years. Periods of non-practice will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term.

Periods of non-practice will relieve Respondent of the responsibility to comply with the probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws; and General Probation Requirements.

- 10. <u>COMPLETION OF PROBATION</u>. Respondent shall comply with all financial obligations (e.g., restitution, probation costs) not later than 120 calendar days prior to the completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, Respondent's certificate shall be fully restored.
- of probation is a violation of probation. If Respondent violates probation in any respect, the Board, after giving Respondent notice and the opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and carry out the disciplinary order that was stayed. If an Accusation, or Petition to Revoke Probation, or an Interim Suspension Order is filed against Respondent during probation, the Board shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.
- 12. <u>LICENSE SURRENDER</u>. Following the effective date of this Decision, if Respondent ceases practicing due to retirement or health reasons or is otherwise unable to satisfy the terms and conditions of probation, Respondent may request to surrender his or her license.

The Board reserves the right to evaluate Respondent's request and to exercise its discretion in determining whether or not to grant the request, or to take any other action deemed appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances. Upon formal acceptance of the surrender, Respondent shall within 15 calendar days deliver Respondent's wallet and wall certificate to the Board or its designee and Respondent shall no longer practice medicine. Respondent will no longer be subject to the terms and conditions of probation. If Respondent re-applies for a medical license, the application shall be treated as a petition for reinstatement of a revoked certificate.

13. <u>PROBATION MONITORING COSTS</u>. Respondent shall pay the costs associated with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be adjusted on an annual basis. Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year.

ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney, Richard J. Conti. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED: 114/2013 CATHERINE BERGER-DUJMOVIC, M.D. Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D. the terms and conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED: ///8/13 RICHARD J. CONTI

Attorney for Respondent

ENDORSEMENT The foregoing Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Medical Board of California of the Department of Consumer Affairs. February 5, 2013 Respectfully submitted, KAMALA D. HARRIS Attorney General of California Jose R. Guerrero Supervising Deputy Attorney General Deputy Attorney General Attorneys for Complainant

Exhibit A

Accusation No. 03-2009-204004

		•	
1	Kamala D. Harris		
2	Attorney General of California JOSE R. GUERRERO	· _	
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General DAVID CARR	FILED STATE OF CALIFORNIA	
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 131672	MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA	
5	455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 11000 San Francisco, CA 94102-7004	SACRAMENTO DECEMBER 7 2011 BYOK, MONTOLBONO ANALYST	
6	Telephone: (415) 703-5538 Facsimile: (415) 703-5480	ANALYSI	
7	Attorneys for Complainant		
8	BEFORE THE		
9	MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS		
10	STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
11	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Medical Board Case No. 03-2009-204004	
12		OAH Case No.	
13	CATHERINE BERGER-DUJMOVIC, M.D.		
14	710 Lawrence Expressway, Suite 386	ACCUSATION	
15	Santa Clara, CA 95051		
16	Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate A 80123		
17	Respondent.		
18			
19			
20	Complainant alleges:		
21	PAR	TIES	
22	PARTIES		
23	1. Linda K. Whitney ("Complainant") t	1. Linda K. Whitney ("Complainant") brings this Accusation solely in her official	
24	capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer		
25	Affairs.		
26	2. The Medical Board of California issued Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate Number		
27	A 80123 to Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D. ("Respondent") on August 9, 2002. The		
28	certificate will expire on June 30, 2012, unless renewed.		
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JURISDICTION

- 3. This Accusation is brought before the Medical Board of California ("the Board"), Department of Consumer Affairs, under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.
 - 4. Section 2227 of the Code states:
- "(a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of the Medical Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government Code, or whose default has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered into a stipulation for disciplinary action with the board, may, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter:
 - "(1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.
- "(2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one year upon order of the board.
- "(3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation monitoring upon order of the board.
- "(4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a requirement that the licensee complete additional relevant educational courses approved by the board.
- "(5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of probation, as the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.
- "(b) Any matter heard pursuant to subdivision (a), except for warning letters, medical review or advisory conferences, professional competency examinations, continuing education activities, and cost reimbursement associated therewith that are agreed to with the board and successfully completed by the licensee, or other matters made confidential or privileged by existing law, is deemed public, and shall be made available to the public by the board pursuant to Section 803.1."

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5. Section 2234 states:

"The Division of Medical Quality¹ shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- "(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter [Chapter 5, the Medical Practice Act].
 - "(b) Gross negligence.
- "(c) Repeated negligent acts. To be repeated, there must be two or more negligent acts or omissions. An initial negligent act or omission followed by a separate and distinct departure from the applicable standard of care shall constitute repeated negligent acts.
- "(1) An initial negligent diagnosis followed by an act or omission medically appropriate for that negligent diagnosis of the patient shall constitute a single negligent act.
- "(2) When the standard of care requires a change in the diagnosis, act, or omission that constitutes the negligent act described in paragraph (1), including, but not limited to, a reevaluation of the diagnosis or a change in treatment, and the licensee's conduct departs from the applicable standard of care, each departure constitutes a separate and distinct breach of the standard of care.

" "

FACTS

6. At all times relevant to the allegations herein Respondent was engaged in the practice of medicine in Santa Clara County, California.

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¹ Effective January 1, 2008, the Legislature abolished the divisions of the Medical Board of California. Under Business and Professions Code section 2002, any reference to the "Division of Medical Quality" or the "Division of Licensing" in the Medical Practice Act (Business and Professions Code section 2000 *et seq*) or any other provision of law now refers to the Medical Board.

- 7. Patient M.G.² was seen by her primary care physician at the Kaiser Permanente facility in Santa Clara on or about August 17, 2009. Physician chart entries from that visit state that M.G. reported that she had not had a menstrual period for approximately 3 months and noted a positive serum pregnancy test result. Her physician advised M.G. to stop her medications and scheduled an obstetric/gynecological consult the following week.
- 8. On August 31, 2009, Respondent first saw patient M.G. Respondent's chart entries for this initial visit reflect a brief history and state that M.G. was experiencing no pregnancy symptoms, that M.G. believed her last menstrual period had been about 3 months prior, and that she suffered from hypertension and cirrhosis. Respondent performed a transvaginal ultrasound, documenting her findings as "No sac in uterus, stripe normal. No masses seen." Respondent did not perform a manual physical examination, believing that M.G.'s body structure precluded a meaningful physical examination. Respondent ordered a pregnancy hormone (hCG) level test to be done that day and repeated two days later. M.G.'s pregnancy hormone tests results were 21914 mIU/ml on August 31 and the September 2 test yielded a reading of 21795 mIU/ml.
- 9. Respondent had numerous conversations by telephone with M.G. over the following 10 days, which included informing M.G. that the laboratory results were consistent with miscarriage. In their conversation, Respondent also described the three alternatives she was recommending to M.G.: await delivery of the residue of pregnancy tissue without medical intervention; undergo a dilation and curettage to surgically cleanse the uterus; or use misoprostol to chemically induce labor and thereby deliver the pregnancy tissue. Respondent did not order a repeat hCG test nor did she perform a second ultrasound or a more encompassing transabdominal ultrasound to confirm her diagnosis of miscarriage. On September 10, 2009, M.G. informed Respondent of her decision to use misoprostol.
- 10. Respondent prescribed analysis and the requisite dose of misoprostol for M.G. on September 10. M.G. came to the Kaiser facility that day to pick up the medications and the printed instructions for administering the misoprostol at home. As the instructions directed,

² The patient is identified herein by initials to maintain confidentiality. The patient's full name will be provided to Respondent upon request.

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M.G. self-administered the misoprostol about 4:00 p.m. that afternoon. At approximately 2 a.m. the next morning M.G. suffered prolonged contraction-like pains and delivered a moving fetus. Paramedics found fetal heart tones and attempted to maintain heartbeat and breathing, but declared the death of the fetus at about 2:45 a.m.

FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Repeated Negligent Acts)

11. The allegations of paragraphs 6 through 10 are incorporated herein by reference as if set out in full. Respondent's license is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234(c) in that her care and treatment of patient M.G. included departures from the standard of care which constitute repeated acts of negligence, including: Respondent's failure to conduct a more comprehensive initial antepartum evaluation, particularly in light of ultrasound findings inconsistent with the patient's believed date of possible conception; and Respondent's election to offer misoprostol to a patient in whom Respondent's transvaginal ultrasound had revealed no pregnancy tissue.

SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Gross Negligence)

12. The allegations of paragraphs 6 through 10 are incorporated herein by reference as if set out in full. Respondent has subjected her license to discipline for unprofessional conduct under section 2234(b) in that Respondent's diagnosis of miscarriage in M.G.--when hormone levels had plateaued but no tissue was evident by transvaginal ultrasound examination—without additional clinically relevant testing was an extreme departure from the standard of care constituting gross negligence.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:

1. Revoking or suspending Physician's & Surgeon's Certificate Number A80123, issued to Catherine Berger-Dujmovic, M.D.;